



Alberta
College of
Pharmacy



Standards of Practice for Continuing Competence

Table of contents

Background	1
Definitions	2
Standards	3
Maintain professional competence	3
Continuing competence program	3
Continuing professional development	3
Competence assessments	3
Records	5
Record keeping requirements	5
Actions to be taken	5
Clinical pharmacists and pharmacy technicians responsible for costs	5

Background

The *Health Professions Act* requires the Council of the Alberta College of Pharmacy (“the College”) to adopt standards of practice that establish a continuing competence program for pharmacists and pharmacy technicians.

These standards establish the continuing competence program of the College.

As with the Standards of Practice for Pharmacists and Pharmacy Technicians, these standards are one component of the law that governs the practice of pharmacists and pharmacy technicians, the operation of pharmacies, and the sale of food and drug products in Alberta. The legislative scheme includes the

- *Health Professions Act*,
- Pharmacists and Pharmacy Technicians Profession Regulation,
- Alberta College of Pharmacy Code of Ethics,
- *Pharmacy and Drug Act*,
- Pharmacy and Drug Regulation,
- Standards for the Operation of Licensed Pharmacies,
- *Food and Drug Act*,
- Food and Drug Regulations, and
- *Animal Health Act*.

Pharmacists and pharmacy technicians practising in Alberta must know, understand, and comply with the overall legislative scheme.

These standards are mandatory and set out the minimum requirements that clinical pharmacists and pharmacy technicians¹ must meet to comply with the continuing competence program, including who must participate and what activities must be undertaken.

These standards also outline which competence assessments will be used in the program and what actions can be taken against a clinical pharmacist or pharmacy technician who has not completed the continuing competence program, maintained proper records and cooperated in submitting them, met established deadlines, or received unsatisfactory results on a competence assessment.

The continuing competence program manual details the rules, policies, and procedures related to a clinical pharmacist’s or pharmacy technician’s participation in, and understanding of, the continuing competence program. The manual should be read in conjunction with these standards so that a clinical pharmacist or pharmacy technician knows how the continuing competence program works and what they must do to comply with each standard.

¹ Clinical pharmacists and pharmacy technicians mean regulated members registered on the clinical pharmacist or pharmacy technician registers.

Definitions

In these standards

- a. **Continuing education unit (CEU)** means a unit of credit equivalent to a period of time spent undertaking self-directed learning activities.
- b. **Practice Improvement Program (PIP)** means a program that will support practice improvement of clinical pharmacists and pharmacy technicians who demonstrate practice and competence deficiencies.
- c. **Professional portfolio** means the learning records, the implementation record, and documentation that verifies a clinical pharmacist's or pharmacy technician's participation and completion of continuing education units, including the prescribed learning activity, which is submitted annually for each continuing education cycle by the clinical pharmacist or pharmacy technician to the College.

Standards

Maintain professional competence

1. Clinical pharmacists and pharmacy technicians must maintain professional competence.

Continuing competence program

2. The continuing competence program comprises
 - a. continuing professional development, including the annual requirements for clinical pharmacists and pharmacy technicians;
 - b. competence assessments, including practice visits; and
 - c. the practice improvement programas established in these standards and detailed in the continuing competence program manual.
3. Clinical pharmacists and pharmacy technicians must participate in the continuing competence program and comply with the direction provided in the continuing competence program manual.

Continuing professional development

Annual requirements for clinical pharmacists and pharmacy technicians

4. A clinical pharmacist or pharmacy technician must
 - a. complete, document, and implement self-directed professional development and earn continuing education units in accordance with the direction provided in the continuing competence program manual; and
 - b. complete professional development directed by the competence committeewithin each continuing education cycle as established in the Alberta College of Pharmacy Bylaws.

Professional portfolios

5. A clinical pharmacist or pharmacy technician must submit a professional portfolio to the College for evaluation at least annually, within the continuing education cycle and in accordance with the direction provided in the continuing competence program manual.

Competence assessments

6. A clinical pharmacist or pharmacy technician must comply with any direction of the competence committee that requires the clinical pharmacist or pharmacy technician to undertake an assessment of the clinical pharmacist's or pharmacy technician's competence (a competence assessment).

7. For the purpose of these standards, the competence committee may direct for its review, a competence assessment that includes one or more of the following processes:
 - a. examinations,
 - b. a review of the records described in Standard 13,
 - c. evaluation of a professional portfolio,
 - d. practice visits,
 - e. interviews,
 - f. any other type of evaluation directed by the competence committee for the purpose of evaluating the clinical pharmacist's or pharmacy technician's competence.
8. For clinical pharmacists only, an assessment for additional prescribing authorization² is a type of evaluation equivalent to a competence assessment and the results may be referred to the competence committee for its review.

Practice improvement program

9. For the purpose of these standards, the practice improvement program may include one or more of the following:
 - a. professional development, and
 - b. competence assessments including practice visitsdirected by the competence committee.
10. In addition to the annual requirements and any other directions given by the competence committee, a clinical pharmacist or pharmacy technician referred to, or any regulated member voluntarily enrolled in, the practice improvement program must comply with the rules of the practice improvement program provided in the continuing competence program manual.
11. A clinical pharmacist, pharmacy technician, or other regulated member voluntarily enrolled in the practice improvement program, must remain enrolled in the practice improvement program until the competence committee is satisfied that the clinical pharmacist, pharmacy technician, or other regulated member has completed the directions given by the competence committee.
12. Despite Standard 11, if a regulated member is unable to complete their voluntary participation in the practice improvement program due to unforeseen or urgent circumstances unrelated to practice and competence issues, the clinical pharmacist, pharmacy technician, or other regulated member may make a request to the competence committee to suspend their involvement in the practice improvement program until the unforeseen or urgent circumstances are resolved.

² Additional prescribing authorization means authorization to prescribe under Sections 16(3) and (4) of the Pharmacists and Pharmacy Technicians Profession Regulation.

Records

Record keeping requirements

13. Each clinical pharmacist and pharmacy technician must keep, and on the request of and in accordance with the direction of the competence committee, provide, in a form and time period satisfactory to the competence committee, records of the activities and competence assessments that the clinical pharmacist or pharmacy technician undertakes for the purpose of continuing professional development for a period of two years.

Actions to be taken

14. A clinical pharmacist or pharmacy technician must comply with the direction of the competence committee as the result of the competence committee's evaluation of the clinical pharmacist's or pharmacy technician's professional portfolio, competence assessment, or finding that the clinical pharmacist or pharmacy technician failed to maintain or produce proper records under Standard 13.
15. For the purpose of Standard 14, a direction of the competence committee may include, but are not limited to, conditions on a practice permit under Section 40.1(1) of the *Health Professions Act*.

Clinical pharmacists and pharmacy technicians responsible for costs

16. Any action that a clinical pharmacist or pharmacy technician or group of clinical pharmacists or pharmacy technicians is required to complete in response to a direction of the competence committee must be undertaken at the cost of the clinical pharmacist or pharmacy technician.
17. If the College provides services to facilitate compliance with any direction by the competence committee, the clinical pharmacist or pharmacy technician must reimburse the College for the costs as determined by the competence committee.